

NARRATIVE

1. NEED AND RATIONALE

BACKGROUND

Like most states in the western United States, Washington lacks a regional preservation organization that provides preservation information, training, and sometimes conservation and/or reformatting services to archives, libraries, museums, and historical societies in this region. During the past few years partnerships have helped to fill the void. These collaborations have enhanced collection stewardship in Washington and they provide a context for this proposal. Conservation needs have been identified and some have been addressed. However, four main issues still require serious exploration (see Conservation Needs below).

In 1998, discussions began among the Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP), <http://www.rap-arcc.org/>, a network of non-profit regional conservation/preservation organizations, about possible RAP outreach programs in the Pacific Northwest. Those discussions led to the Northeast Documents Conservation Center (NEDCC) scheduling a national preservation conference, “School for Scanning”, at the University of Washington in September 2000. Immediately following, the School for Scanning, librarians, and others in the Pacific Northwest interested in preservation met with members of RAP at the University of Washington (UW) for a conference, “Swimming Upstream: Cooperatively Preserving Collections in the Pacific Northwest.” Information about this conference can be located at <http://www.lib.washington.edu/Preservation/swimmingupstream.html>.

Outcomes of this conference included: 1) A vision for preservation in the Pacific Northwest, <http://www.lib.washington.edu/Preservation/vision.html>; 2) a regional preservation email discussion list, Preservenw, hosted by the University of Washington, <http://www.lib.washington.edu/Preservation/preservenw.html>; and 3) discussions with regional state libraries about supporting preservation activities.

A proposal made to the Washington State Library (WSL) to utilize federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds to support preservation of library collections resulted in the Washington Preservation Initiative (WPI). The initiative’s goal was: “To help libraries safeguard Washington’s cultural heritage.” As a first step, WSL contracted with OCLC to develop a mail survey complemented by targeted telephone interviews. The survey, completed in 2004 and available for other states to use, can be found at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/presSurveySummary2004.pdf>.

The survey found that in most Washington libraries preservation was a low priority with low funding levels and low preservation staffing levels. However, there was “a strong endorsement of the WPI as an instrument to change the level of preservation awareness and impact in the state of Washington.” The survey identified the need for funding for preservation projects, for preservation training, and for individual library surveys to help identify and prioritize preservation needs.

Between 2003 and 2007, \$716,000 was allocated by the Washington State Library for the Washington Preservation Initiative (WPI). 77 percent of the allocated funding went to small preservation projects that included photograph negative duplication, microfilming, deacidification, environmental monitoring, and preservation assessments. An additional \$110,000 has been targeted for 2008 bringing the total allocation to \$826,000 with 80 percent targeted toward small preservation projects.

Twenty-two Washington libraries have had recent preservation surveys, most funded by WPI. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the federal agency that administers LSTA, has funded conservation assessment surveys in 47 Washington museums since 1990. WPI

also sponsored 36 one-day training workshops on a wide range of preservation topics at no cost to over 900 registrants.

A 2006 survey on the impact of WPI found that, “The level of satisfaction with the program is extremely high and the impact of the program has been high as well.” “WPI was recognized for going beyond library types and geographic boundaries seen in many statewide programs.” A Washington State Library program administrator said, “No other continuing education program has had this great of a reception in the past 10 years.” “This effort has proven to be a model of the ‘next wave’ of statewide preservation programs in its broad programmatic offerings and wide audience appeal.” The survey results are available at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/presTomsFinalSurveyReport.pdf>.

In 2004-05, to meet the need for more comprehensive training than could be provided in one-day workshops, the Pacific Northwest Preservation Management Institute (PMI) was held at the UW. It was funded by an IMLS grant to the Northeast Documents Conservation Center. Partners were several members of the Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP) and the UW. PMI included three weeks of training over a period of eight months. An initial week of training at the UW was followed by assignments to be completed by participants at their home institutions. A second week of training was also followed by at-home assignments to be completed before the third and final week at the UW. Twenty-three librarians, archivists, and museum curators from Idaho, Oregon, and Washington participated.

Preservation 101 was also funded by an IMLS grant. This was a 2006 online distance learning program that provided preservation training to 20 staff members from smaller libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums in Alaska, Oregon, and Washington, some in remote locations. The students worked online with mentors to help them and completed assignments.

In June 2006, an Alliance for Response Forum, a project of Heritage Preservation, was held in Seattle at the Museum of History and Industry. The goal of the Forum was to foster dialog between first responders (firemen, policemen, etc.) and representatives of cultural institutions (archivists, conservators, librarians, and museum curators) to improve readiness to respond to disasters. It brought together 86 people, most of whom didn’t know each other and would not have met in the course of their normal work lives, giving each group a better understanding of the other’s concerns and needs in responding to emergency situations.

The Washington State Library, Washington State Archives, and University of Washington are among the collaborators in the Western States and Territories Preservation Services (WESTPAS), a new group that is helping to provide preservation services in the western United States. Funded by a federal National Endowment for the Humanities grant, six preservation librarians in the Western United States are involved as planners and trainers. Initially WESTPAS will provide disaster preparedness and emergency response training in western states. Forty workshops are planned in 11 states and three U.S. Pacific territories, with the first scheduled for fall 2007.

The Washington Office of the Secretary of State will build a Heritage Center on the Capitol campus, scheduled for 2012, that will bring together the Washington State Library, the Washington State Archives, and the State Capitol Museum, an outlet of the Washington State Historical Society.

CONSERVATION NEEDS

The efforts to help safeguard the cultural heritage of Washington outlined above have resulted in a preservation vision, a heightened awareness of preservation, many staff members with preservation training, assessments of preservation needs of some libraries, some exemplary preservation projects, and a constituency of committed professionals within the state. To build on

this base and meet unaddressed conservation needs, this project and the resulting model statewide preservation plan will address four issues:

- 1) **Collaborative disaster planning.** In the 2006 WPI Survey only 14 percent of institutions said they had a written disaster plan; another 10 percent said a plan was being prepared. This conservation focus addresses the Heritage Health Index (HHI) recommendation that collecting institutions “develop an emergency plan.” (Source: Alliance for Response and 2006 WPI Survey.)
- 2) **Building sustainable institutional preservation programs.** This focus includes helping institutions identify and prioritize their preservation needs. “Another key area of concern, which many libraries asked for assistance in addressing, is development of workflow, staff time, and staff funding to do preservation work at individual institutions” (2006 WPI Survey). This conservation focus addresses the HHI recommendation that collecting institutions “provide safe conditions for their collections and assign responsibility for collections care.”
- 3) **Advocacy.** “... even greater marketing of future preservation efforts needs to be done” (2006 WPI Survey). The HHI states, “collecting institutions marshal public and private support for and raise public awareness about collections care.”
- 4) **A sustainable statewide preservation program.** Washington needs an organizational model and funding for continuing preservation collaborations in the state. “Funding was seen as the biggest preservation challenge to the libraries surveyed” (2004 WPI Survey). A sustainable statewide preservation program is key to achieving the HHI recommendations for our state.

2. PLANNING PROCESS

PARTNERS AND STEERING COMMITTEE

The partners in this proposal and the institutional contacts are:

- Washington State Library, Diane Hutchins, Manager of the Preservation and Access Services Program
- Washington State Archives, Tri Howard, State Records Manager
- Washington State Historical Society, Tamara Georgick, Director of Information Technology
- University of Washington, Gary Menges, Preservation Administrator
- Washington Library Association, Rayette Sterling, Northwest Librarian, Spokane Public Library
- Washington Museum Association, Marsha Rooney, Curator of History at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture (Spokane, WA) and President of the Association

The partners for the application will form a steering committee which will be chaired by one of the partners, Gary Menges. Other stakeholders from Washington cultural heritage organizations will be invited to serve on this committee and its subcommittees. The Steering Committee will work through face-to-face and virtual meetings. The Steering Committee will make decisions through consensus and all partners will have an equal voice.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for oversight of the project activities including developing an initial planning conference, appointing action committees on each of the four conservation concerns and monitoring their progress, developing a follow-up conference,

finalizing the statewide preservation plan, and seeking adoption from cultural heritage organizations. The Steering Committee will establish a Conference Planning Committee.

PROCESS

Initial Planning Conference

An initial day and a half conference will be scheduled to address the four conservation issues noted above: 1) collaborative disaster planning; 2) building sustainable institutional preservation programs; 3) advocacy; and 4) building a sustainable statewide preservation program. The Initial Planning Conference will initiate a process for developing a statewide plan for preserving the collections of Washington's cultural heritage organizations.

The Conference Planning Committee will plan the Initial Planning Conference through the work of subcommittees drawn from the partner organizations and constituents. The Washington State Library, using project grant funds, will contract with a Conference Manager and Conference Facilitator to facilitate implementation of the conference.

Participants will be invited from Washington's preservation constituency. Roughly one-third will come from the Washington library community, one-third from the Washington museum community, and one-third from the Washington archive community, conservators, and decision-makers. There will be no expense to attend the conference and participants' travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Speakers or panels will address the four conservation issues during the first half-day session. This session will be open to a broad audience interested in preservation issues.

On the second day, the invited conference participants will hear about model programs in other states, e.g., New York (The New York State Program for the Conservation and Preservation of Library Research Materials, <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/cp/>, Barbara Lilley, blilley@mail.nysed.gov) and North Carolina (North Carolina Preservation Consortium, <http://www.ncpreservation.org/>, Robert James, robert.james@duke.edu). They will also be assigned to small discussion groups to assure a mix of institutions. Each small discussion group will be assigned two of the four topics for brainstorming and discussion. Following lunch the final afternoon session will include reporting back of thoughts and recommendations. This program format was successfully used by the Seattle Alliance for Response Forum. The Conference Facilitator will coordinate the work of small groups, reporting out, and summarizing.

Participants will also be asked to sign up for the topics in which they are particularly interested. Utilizing these lists, the Steering Committee will select subcommittees to continue discussions and make formal action recommendations at a second conference leading to the development of a statewide plan.

Second Planning Conference

At the second conference, the subcommittees will report their recommendations on the four conservation issues. Based on these recommendations, a consultant-writer will develop a statewide preservation plan. As with the initial planning conference, there will be no charge to participants for attending the conference and travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Statewide Preservation Plan

Following the second planning conference the consultant-writer will work with the Steering Committee to finalize the statewide preservation plan. Steering Committee members will seek endorsement of the plan by the organizations they represent. The Steering Committee will also discuss the appropriate means by which to distribute the statewide preservation plan, potentially both through print and virtual means. Additionally, the Steering Committee will

implement means for sustaining discussion of preserving cultural heritage collections using regional and statewide listservs, publications, and meetings of cultural organizations.

The plan will form the basis for a proposal to be submitted to IMLS in October 2009 to implement this model statewide preservation plan. The Steering Committee will prepare a second phase Connecting to Collections grant application as a final project activity.

3. PROJECT RESOURCES: BUDGET AND PERSONNEL

PRIMARY PERSONNEL

Rand Simmons, Program Manager for Library Development, Washington State Library, will serve as the Project Director and Primary Contact/Grants Administrator. Dr. Simmons has more than twelve years' experience managing Library Services and Technology Act funds and LSTA-funded projects. He is also a skilled facilitator and will work closely with the Conference Facilitator. He was previously associated with the Idaho State Library. Estimated FTEs: .10. Source of funding: agency contribution.

Susan Barrett, Washington State Library, is a Consultant with the Library Development Program. She was the Project Manager of the Washington Preservation Initiative. Susan will serve as the Project Manager assisting the Project Director by managing the operational aspects of the project. Among her responsibilities will be serving as staff to the Steering Committee, liaison to the Conference Manager and Conference Facilitator, and lead to WSL support staff. Estimated FTEs: .50. Source of funding: agency contribution.

Gary Menges, Preservation Administrator, University of Washington Libraries, will serve as Chair of the Steering Committee. Gary served as Chair of the Washington Preservation Initiative and will bring content expertise to the project. He will work closely with the Consultant-Writer. Estimated FTEs: .10. Source of funding: cost sharing.

MAJOR BUDGET EXPENSES (See budget and budget narrative for costs)

- Cost to hire a Conference Manager to coordinate all aspects of the initial and second planning conferences.
- Cost to hire a Conference Facilitator to facilitate small group work and reporting out at the initial planning conference and to facilitate subcommittee reporting at the second conference from which a summary will be prepared for the Consultant-Writer. Dr. Simmons will also serve as a co-Conference Facilitator.
- Cost to hire a Consultant-Writer who will present at the Initial Planning Conference and attend the second conference to work with the Steering Committee to draft and finalize the statewide preservation plan.
- Expenses associated with the planning conferences including speaker costs, facilities, and participant travel expenses.
- Expenses associated with facilitating the work of the Steering Committee, Conference Planning Committee, and subcommittees. This will include expenses associated with bringing committees and subcommittees together in-person and virtually.
- Expenses associated with production and distribution of the statewide preservation plan.